

This is episode 3 of our 'Journey' podcast series entitled 'Burden of Ignorance'.

- We've all heard the phrase 'ignorance is bliss'; but is it really bliss? Have you ever said to yourself, "if I had known then what I know now, things would be different"? Is there power in knowing? And, can the false sense of security resulting from a blissful state of ignorance be used against us? Let's dive in.
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- The purpose of this podcast is to equip you with the tools to not be taken advantage of by those who understand the power of information but don't necessarily have our best interests. Please be sure to visit our website, TakeThisSeriouslyMedia.com for free resources to further equip you with the uncommon-truth you need.



**We have the freedom of choice.**

- It's generally believed that freedom simply means freedom to choose our own destiny.
- A person who has freedom in society has the ability to determine how their life will play out by making their own choices.
- For example, robbing, vandalizing, and killing could be a quick means to an end, but also could create a destiny of your own choosing that has you ending up in prison.
- By the same token, getting an education and a job, and being a part of the middle-class workforce could demand years of your time but also could produce a destiny of building a solid name and reputation as an upstanding member of your community.
- But does this formula always work?
- Are you always given the choices necessary to obtain your desired stake in life and achieve your destiny?
- Let me give you an example. I'm going to give you a multiple choice quiz.
- You'll have 2 options to choose from; of which only 1 is the right answer.
- Here's the question:
- What social practice is best for minorities to have the best quality of life in society?
- Option 1: Integration
- Option 2: Segregation
- If you're like me, integration is probably the knee-jerk response.
- It's no secret that all of the signals around us seem to point to integration as the best choice for minorities.
- After all, there's not much else to choose from.
- The only other alternative is segregation, and that leaves a bad taste our mouths because of its association with Jim Crow.
- But what if I told you that segregation has worked before for minorities?
- What if I told you that there is solid empirical evidence that segregation in this country has produced a self-sustained close network of wealth producing businesses and institutions consisting exclusively of minorities that continued to thrive and proliferate?
- What if I told you that a true wealth ecosystem was produced SOLELY as the result of segregation, needing no intervention from the outside majority white society surrounding it?
- I say again, SOLELY as a result of white society's insistence of segregation was this wealth ecosystem produced.
- I must confess that for over forty years of my life, I have never so much as imagined that such a thing could be possible.
- My ignorance was my bliss; and I blissfully embraced integration as the only way to achieve any quality of life.
- My destiny as I understood it was tied directly to the choices I was given in life; which involved either (1) being granted inclusion into a pre-existing system in which the people there by law had to tolerate my existence in their system, or (2) shunning that inclusion and embracing the street-life of my segregated predominantly black community.
- There was no pathway to any quality of life other than integration.
- So if freedom means freedom to choose my own destiny, but I was free only to choose from what I was given to choose, was I really free?

**It's true; segregation alone is responsible for the creation of Black Wall Street.**

- As many of you no doubt have already guessed, I was referring to Black Wall Street earlier when I mentioned that I was ignorant of the possibility that a wealth ecosystem could exist absent of integration.
- I recently watched a documentary about Black Wall Street produced by the History Channel.
- According to this documentary, the label 'Black Wall Street' derived from what Booker T. Washington described as the 'Negro Wall Street of America' as he was passing through the Greenwood community of Tulsa Oklahoma.
- He was astonished at the level of enterprise and efficiency he observed within the business commerce of this exclusively black community.
- In the early 1900's, this community of over 11,000 black residents contained 108 black owned businesses, 2 theatres, 2 black schools, 15 doctor's offices, and an abundance of black land owners.
- Having already gained national recognition, this community became a lightning-rod for attracting black people everywhere to come to a place where they have the real potential for land ownership, and where they are accepted to join in and take part in building a life for their families.
- But what I believe is it's the most important achievement of all is the unsung nature of how it came into being.
- This was not some racially motivated statement by black people; as if to say "I can compete with the white establishment".
- Black Wall Street came into being exclusively because black people were segregated; confined to the community of Greenwood and prohibited from participating in any other business centers of the city of Tulsa.
- Black Wall Street was a completely unexpected side-effect of white exclusion; and its proliferation was completely organic.
- Opposed to The History Channel's characterization that it thrived in spite of segregation and Jim Crow laws, it thrived BECAUSE OF the segregation that confined them to the community of Greenwood, and BECAUSE OF the Jim Crow laws within the mainstream business centers of Tulsa which aimed to diminish their sense of self-worth and prohibit their participation in commerce.
- So this begs the question: If segregation produced Black Wall Street, is segregation inherently a bad thing?
- Can it possibly be beneficial as an alternative to integration, and as a pathway for creating the potential for quality of life?
- Was my ignorance of the fact that segregation caused Black Wall Street merely due to my not having encountered this information yet, or is there more to it than that?
- Let's consider the so-called race riot that burned Black Wall Street to the ground.
- If it is a fact that the burning of Black Wall Street constitutes the biggest racially motivated riot of American history, then why was such an event excluded from our public school education curriculum?
- How could an event where a white mob reduced 36 square blocks... let me say it again... 36 square blocks to ash within 24 hours, leaving over 100 black men murdered and over a thousand homeless not be a relevant education topic of social dynamics?
- Are certain facts like these about American History deliberately excluded from public general knowledge?
- Have we been given the illusion of choice, especially when the word segregation leaves a bad taste in our mouths since the Civil Rights movement?
- And, if we have been given the illusion of choice, have we also been given the illusion of freedom?

**Let's get real.**

- If we take a hard look at the facts surrounding the burning of Black Wall Street, we have an obligation to call into question certain details.
- When you think 'riot', you think of an angry, senseless mob; devoid of any planned strategy, mission-centered objective, or time-sensitive discipline.
- You see, those are traits regarding the military or police as defacto rules of engagement.
- So let's do the math.
- 36 square blocks within a 24 hour period reduced to smoldering rubble... not 3 square blocks; not 13 square blocks.
- Over 100 black men murdered in its wake; which means, there was obvious resistance.
- This would present the reasonable expectation that the angry senseless mob could at least be stalled or hindered from completing their historic feat within the constraints of 24 hours.
- And we're talking about the year 1921; where the average Joe (white men or otherwise) had to make do without the advantages of modern technology.
- So does the burning of 36 square blocks within 24 hours still sound like the accomplishment of an angry race mod to you?
- Or does this sound like a precision, government sponsored strike on American soil to destabilize a working economy?
- Does this sound like a race riot, or does this sound like government funded terrorism?
- After all, weren't the black folks of the Greenwood community following all the rules of segregation?
- And are we seriously going scapegoat responsibility of this riot on white men's ability to plea temporary insanity as a way to prompt justification and sympathy for their actions?
- It is time for us to come to grips with the fact that true segregation is not really what the majority white society intended.
- The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines segregation as follows: "the separation or isolation of a race, class, or ethnic group by enforced or voluntary residence in a restricted area".
- This fits the community of Greenwood spot on; and due to the extent to which Greenwood was destroyed, obviously segregation became undesirable.
- Let's think about this rationally.
- Jim Crow laws are meaningless without integration.
- In order for Jim Crow laws to be effective; laws requiring black folks to sit in the back of the bus, and requiring the refusal of service to black folks in restaurants, doesn't that mean that the people those laws are supposed to be designed for be 'first' integrated into the society?
- So Jim Crow laws are really associated with integration, not segregation.
- So let me ask you: when you hear the term 'segregation', what does your mind think of?
- Does it automatically go back to the Jim Crow era; where 'colored only' signs were posted everywhere for water fountains and bathrooms?
- Does segregation spark images of key symbols of the Civil Rights Movement like Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; in which the fight to overcome Jim Crow was the main struggle?
- Here's a better question: Is it a coincidence that within the first 5 minutes of the Black Wall Street documentary of The History Channel, segregation and Jim Crow are lumped together into one?
- Is it more likely that mainstream media through the History Channel and others are attempting to indoctrinate its viewers with a specific point of view; a view that gives distaste to the idea of segregation due to its contrived association with Jim Crow, and thus requires minorities' absolute dependence on integration in order to achieve any quality of life?

- The truth is, segregation as we know it now is not the same as what its original definition stipulates.
- The truth is, segregation as we know it now was really redefined as integration with discretionary privileges given to a certain class of individuals by way of Jim Crow.
- And the truth is, integration as we know it now is really defined as dependence of minorities on the system they're integrated into.

**My friends, ignorance is not bliss, it is a burden.**

- And it is a burden especially to those who don't realize that others with knowledge use their ignorance against them.
- How do we 'know' Black Wall Street can never be achieved again?
- If our outlook for quality of life is riddled with despair and hopelessness barring the advantages of integration, as was my outlook, perhaps there's a reason.
- We must allow ourselves the ability to imagine life beyond the limitations of what's spoon fed to us.
- The possibility that Black Wall Street can exist again is real.
- If we are content to settle in dismissing it all together, and concede that the social and political constructs of our time simply won't allow it, then we who have obtained precious knowledge are no different than those who are blissfully ignorant.
- Something we perhaps never thought was possible.... Is possible; and there is real empirical evidence to back it up.
- But those individuals who would rather burn down our dreams of Black Wall Street and prefer we remained content, ignorant and happy with what little we have are still at large.
- They are literally counting on the fact that we prize the bliss of our comfort over the providence of our destiny.
- We can no longer accept that our destiny is only to embrace a comfortable grave.
- We can no longer see ourselves through the lens of only what integration permits.
- We now have the truth, and the truth has made us free from the subjugation of ignorance.
- In a song called 'I Get Out', Lauren Hill gives this clarion call artistic expression:
- I won't support your lie no more  
I won't even try no more  
If I have to die oh Lord  
That's how I choose to live  
I won't be compromised no more  
I can't be victimized no more  
I just don't sympathize no more  
Cause now I understand  
...  
I don't respect your system  
I won't protect your system  
When you talk I don't listen  
Oh let My Father's will be done  
...  
Are you sure which god you're serving  
Obligated to a system  
Getting less than you're deserving  
Who made up these schools I say  
Who made up these rules I say  
Animal conditioning  
Just to keep us as a slave  
I get out
- My friends, if we choose to just accept that there's no way out; that integration is the only answer, and that Black Wall Street can only be a distant memory, then the only thing we'll be lacking in life... is bliss.